

‘UNPRECEDENTED’



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Senior forward Ryan Hawkins hoists the 2021 NCAA Division II National Championship trophy above his head in the aftermath of Northwest men's basketball's blowout 80-54 win over West Texas A&M March 27 at the Ford Center in Evansville, Indiana. Hawkins was named the Elite Eight Tournament's Most Outstanding Player after dropping 31 points in the title game.

Bearcats dominate to win program's third title in four seasons

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

EVANSVILLE, Ind. — Northwest men's basketball was never supposed to be here. The Bearcats watched last season's title run crumble due to COVID-19 halting the world of sports, and they weren't sure if they'd be able to play this year either, at least not until the MIAA announced Oct. 1 that a 22-game, conference-only season would take place. After battling through the gauntlet that is the MIAA, the Bearcats were three minutes away from hav-

ing their season ended courtesy of Northern State in the Central Region Championship. Northwest trailed by 11 points with 3 minutes and 4 seconds left before battling back to defeat Northern in overtime. That win punched their ticket to the Elite Eight for the third time in five years. The Bearcats beat West Liberty 98-77 in the Elite Eight March 24. The Bearcats defeated third-seeded Flagler 77-46 in the Final Four March 25. And the second-seeded Bearcats took down top-seeded West Texas A&M 80-54 in the National Championship March 27,

which secured the program's third national title. That's where they are now — not cutting down the nets inside of the Ford Center, but once again, at the pinnacle of Division II basketball. "It's a great day to be a Bearcat right now, that's for sure," Northwest senior forward Ryan Hawkins said during his virtual press conference after the beatdown of the Buffaloes in the title game. "The feeling never gets old." "It was probably the most difficult one," said Northwest coach Ben McCollum, who has been at

the helm of the program during all three national titles. "Just in regards to handling success, the emotions of COVID, the emotions of last year — all of those different things — it made it really difficult." The Bearcats (28-2) had a 23-day period in December in which they were in quarantine due to COVID-19 issues within the program. That, of course, didn't set them too far off track for their latest national title run, as their beatdown of the Buffs (19-3) made them the first team to win back-to-back national titles since Cal State Bakersfield

in 1993-94. They only had a couple of days of practice before defeating Northeastern State 74-55 Dec. 31. It was a culmination of moments like that, McCollum said, that willed the Bearcats toward hoisting the most coveted trophy in Division II basketball. "It makes it a mental grind. It's a mental grind," McCollum said. "I said at the beginning of the year that the team that was going to win this was the toughest, mentally."

SEE CHAMPS | A6



NAME HERE | NW MISSOURIAN

A sign supporting Tim Jackson's bid for City Council sits along First Street in Maryville ahead of the city's upcoming April 6 election. Jackson, the owner of Title Town Bar and Grill, has not participated in local media interviews.

CITY ELECTION 2021

Outspoken candidate Tim Jackson quiet ahead of City Council election

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor | @andrewwegley

After his early and loud opposition to Maryville's mask ordinance gained him prominence in the local political scene — making him a voice for those fed up with Maryville's City Council and skeptical of the coronavirus altogether — Tim Jackson is now less than a week away from his first appearance on a ballot after months of conservative activism.

Jackson, who in July gained local and regional media attention for posting a "No masks allowed" sign at his business, is one of two candidates who has gained widespread support from the Maryville and Nodaway County Resident Council as a conservative martyr, though he has only posted once on the group's Facebook page, making an initial announcement Nov. 25 of his campaign for City Council, promising

that he is "not a puppet" in a note that contained 36 words and garnered 58 likes in a group that now has 1,100 members. Still, his bid for one of two open City Council seats in the April 6 municipal election will test the group's impact on local politics and the strength of its support for Jackson.

SEE JACKSON | A6

City faces \$3.5 million gap in funds for project

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | @calfee_kc

Maryville city officials are left with a \$3.5 million gap after bids for the South Main Improvement Project came in over budget. The low bid for the project came in at \$14.7 million from Amino Brother Co, Inc. Other bids came in at \$15.5 million and \$17.5 million, respectively. The problem with these numbers, City Manager Greg McDaniel said, is that the project was originally budgeted to cost \$12 million. But that was before COVID-19. The three construction companies in consideration are bidding higher than expected because materials like concrete, asphalt and piping cost 20% to 30% higher following the COVID-19 pandemic. Nationwide, similar projects were put on hold last year, and locally, many projects had been moved from summer 2020 construction dates to spring 2021. Leading manufacturers of these construction products are located in Texas, where unexpected power outages in last month's storm delayed production and disrupted livelihoods throughout the state. McDaniel said local companies have even cited tariffs on China rising pipe packaging costs 50% to 60%.

While the initial budget being lower than received bids is common for large-scale projects, a pandemic year did not help matters. Since the South Main Improvement Proj-

ect bids came back 23% over the city engineer's original estimate, officials are now left with three options, McDaniel said. The city will attempt to find additional funding, either in house or through other state or federal agencies providing relief funds. Officials could also analyze the merits of a rebid process and the timing that would be involved, or look at changing the project's scope to align with the original budget. All three of those options are now being coordinated with the Missouri Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, both of which have provided oversight since day one when the city acquired BUILD grants in 2018. "We could change the project scope by taking out decorative lighting or aesthetic features, and really focusing on functionality, but you can't really chip away at a \$3 million gap like that," McDaniel said. "You're not going to make up that much ground." The project budget shows the city invested \$2.6 million of in-house funds toward designs for the project, the Evergy Utility Agreement and administering construction and inspections. The city put an additional \$778,825 toward the project from fiscal year 2021 funding flexibility.

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Students now eligible for COVID shot

MADLINE MAPES
Assistant News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

The University sent an email to students March 30 in regard to the opening of Phase 3 of Missouri’s vaccination rollout, which is set to begin April 9. Although Phase 1B Tier 3 — which opened March 15 — allowed for some students to be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine, Phase 3 will allow all college-aged students to be eligible.

The email included a link to Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville’s registration page for the system’s mass vaccination clinic’s waitlist.

Community Health Nurse Bridget Kenny said all students, including out-of-state students and international students, can sign up to receive a COVID-19 vaccine at the mass vaccination clinics held at the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse nearly every week.

This week’s clinic was held March 31, where roughly 477 local residents were scheduled to receive a dose of the vaccine. Kenny said 300 Pfizer and 50 Moderna first doses will be given, along with 127 second doses of mostly Pfizer vaccines.

Kenny said students can preregister for the mass vaccination clinics with Mosaic - Maryville online like the rest of the community with their local Maryville address. Those who live on campus can use their campus address for the sign up as well.

She also noted that international students will follow the same process, but for some students, there are caveats to the process.

There was an instance where Kenny had to help an international student with their preregistration process. She said the student did not have a social security number, which is required to sign up.

“We have ways we have to work around things like that,” Kenny said.

Kenny said students who have issues with signing up may call the Nodaway County Health Department. If the health department is unable to help, Mosaic - Maryville will be contacted.

President of Mosaic - Maryville Nate Blackford said there is also the fact that the Moderna vaccine is for people 18 years and older, while

the Pfizer vaccine is for people 16 years and older.

Blackford explained that when students put in their birth date when preregistering, the hospital will make sure to sign students up for the proper vaccine for their age.

“We’ll work through those details,” Blackford said. “That shouldn’t be a reason for somebody not to get the vaccine.”

Kenny mentioned another issue that may arise for students looking to get the vaccine at the mass vaccination clinics.

She said as of March 30, the first mass clinic to be held after the opening of Phase 3, which opens eligibility to students, will be April 14. Students interested may be scheduled for their first dose at that clinic, but their second dose would need to be administered around May 12, which is after classes and graduation.

Blackford noted before that it is best that community members, including students, get their second dose in the same place they get their first dose, otherwise vaccine availability is thrown off balance. Students who decide to leave directly after the semester will have to travel back to Maryville to get their second dose, unless they can find a vaccine administrator to give them their second dose.

Kenny noted that it would be easier if students would stay in Maryville until they have received their second shot or came back to get it if they did decide to leave town.

“If you had a mass influx of people just needing second doses, it could really mess with the vaccine numbers,” Kenny said.

She noted that Mosaic - Maryville has made exceptions to the guidance, allowing people who needed a second dose to receive it from the hospital, even though they did not get their first dose with Mosaic- Maryville.

Blackford and Kenny continued to urge community members to remain cautious as people try to find some normalcy, especially with the termination of the mask mandate March 23.

Blackford said even though Maryville no longer has a mask mandate and the number of cases in

TRACKING COVID-19: NEW DAILY CASES IN COUNTY DURING MARCH



BRYSN SWAVEY | NW MISSOURIAN

the county is low, the virus is still very much prominent.

He said that wherever the coronavirus exists, people run the risk of catching it and cases increasing.

“A threat remains,” Blackford said.

Gov. Mike Parson extended the Missouri state of emergency until August 31, to continue COVID-19 recovery throughout the state March 29. Despite almost 25% of the state’s population having initiated the vaccination process, it shows that Missouri is not quite finished with its seemingly never-ending battle with the coronavirus.

Missouri has seen larger spikes in cases in the past year, but recently, according to the New York Times, the state has had recent smaller spikes in the last two weeks. Cases began to increase March 22 with 390 new cases. By March 25, there were 1,207 peo-



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

Dr. Scott Holman fills syringes with doses of the Moderna vaccine at the mass vaccination clinic in the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse March 10.

ple in the state who had tested positive for COVID-19. As of March 29, the number of new cases has dropped to 403.

During the time between March 22-25, Nodaway County didn’t reflect the dramatic increase the overall state saw, going from one new active case to three new cases. The Nodaway County Health Department reported five more cases March 26, but new active cases have remained below that since then.

According to the Nodaway County and Northwest COVID-19 dashboards, as of March 29, the latest information available, there are 16 active COVID-19 cases in the county, five of which involve Northwest staff or students. The seven-day rolling av-

erage for new cases in the county is two. A total of 2,653 Nodaway Countians have had COVID-19, and 23 people within the county have died because of the virus.

According to the Missouri COVID-19 dashboard, as of March 30, Nodaway County is ranked 20 out of 115 counties with the highest population that has started the vaccination process, with almost 25% of the population completing the first vaccination.

Blackford and Kenny agreed that the county was beginning to turn a corner to hopefully see an end to the coronavirus pandemic, but they urged people to follow mitigation guidelines, including social distancing and hand-washing.



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University policy change suspends Senate donations

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Reporter | @sidney_lowry

Kori Hoffmann, the assistant vice president of student affairs, announced at the March 30 Student Senate meeting that the Senate is no longer able to make charitable donations due to policy change from the University’s finance office.

Hoffmann said he was informed of this change from the finance office last week, but he was still unclear on what exactly this policy change means for the donations Student Senate is allowed to give.

“I feel like the rules are constantly changing for us as professionals, and they are constantly changing for student organizations as well,” Hoffmann said. “Basically us being able to appropriate philanthropy dollars may not be allowed anymore.”

Kirayle Jones, Student Senate president, said that not being able to give out these donations to student organizations could have a huge impact on if those organizations are able to continue running.

“We see big service-based organizations come in, notably St. Jude, and they function off of donations,” Jones said. “So these charitable donations that get cut from the daily activities of Student Senate will then impact those other organizations.”

During the meeting, Jones said there was nothing they could do right then about the problem with the donations. He mentioned that the ability to appropriate this money is in their bylaws, causing confusion as to why they would no longer be able to donate money.

“Are we no longer able to show support to organizations that need money to run?” Jones said during the meeting.

Hoffmann said during the meeting this will force Student Senate to amend their bylaws to fit the policy change.

“It’s been in our bylaws that have been approved by the Board of Regents and then reviewed by Husch Blackwell and legal, and it’s been there for years,” Hoff-



MARYANN JOHNSON | NW MISSOURIAN
Sophomore Hunter Grantham listens to announcements at the Student Senate meeting March 30. Grantham is currently sophomore class president but is running for Student Senate vice president.

mann said. “It is a big-picture project, probably a 99th Student Senate project as far as revising bylaws and conversations with finance.”

When it comes to donations that have already been made to organizations, Hoffmann said they should still be approved because it was passed through the Senate. They will have to work with finance if they say that the expense is not allowed.

Despite the fact that there was a change in the policy, there is still some uncertainty on what that means in the future for appropriations and donations.

“It may require us to think a little more creatively, but I think there is still a way,” Hoffmann said to the Senate. “I don’t know what is allowed anymore; I’m confused myself.”



SUBMITTED
People have fun throwing axes at the Axe Factor St. Joe trailer last fall in St. Joseph. A&M Amusements partnered with Axe Factor St. Joe in mid-February. The Axe Factor St. Joe will be at Northwest Missouri State University for the school’s “day of engagement” April 2.

Ax-throwing venues hurl their way into local entertainment

HAILEY MACH
News Reporter | @haileym98

As COVID-19 restrictions begin to loosen up, students and local residents may be in search of an exciting way to reconnect with friends and family as the weather warms up. Ax throwing, a popular activity trending across younger generations, has thrown its way into Maryville.

Two new ax-throwing businesses will aim to provide the community a fun place to throw sharp objects, share laughter and create memories. One of these is newly available to Maryville residents, and the other is in the making.

Timbear Cats Axe Throwing will be a new family-friendly source of entertainment located in the downtown square.

Timbear Cats Owner Shawn Thornton described his business as “not like your traditional ax throwing” and said that there will be an assortment of ax-throwing games. The facility will have games involving moving targets, tic-tac-toe, zombie slaying and potentially a game involving the opposing team’s mascot during Northwest’s homecoming.

“The several that I’ve done, they’ve all kind of been the same,” Thornton said. “When I was exploring it, it was finding something that’s going to be different. I mean, you want it to be for everybody, and some of them are just kind of, you feel like you’re throwing in a dungeon, in a sense sometimes.”

Scores will be logged digitally on a screen located above participants.

A viral video of a girl throwing an ax, missing the target and the ax bouncing off the floor directly back at her — luckily just clearing her body as she ducked down — sparked some concerns in regard to safety.

To ensure customer safety, Thornton said Timbear Cats will be using a patent-pending system where axes stick better to the targets and are less likely to bounce back to participants.

“Our axes have a higher stick ratio, so that gives it a better time for you if you’ve never been, or if somebody’s been only a couple times, sometimes it’s hard to get the motion and how it works, but we want it to be enjoyable for as much as you have, have a good ex-

perience,” Thornton said.

Thornton anticipates there will be eight ax-throwing lanes that allow for six people in each. He said the facility will additionally offer children a similar activity to include them in the fun, but without the sharp heavy ax.

To book an appointment, customers will be able to sign up for reservation times on Timbear Cat’s up-and-coming website and sign the required waiver.

Thornton hopes for Timbear Cats to open for business sometime this spring. He said the official location of the ax-throwing facility will likely be announced in the coming weeks.

In addition to ax-throwing lanes divided by reserved groups to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, Timbear Cats plans to follow city guidelines for COVID-19 mitigation measures.

A&M Amusements, a party and event rental company, recently added mobile ax throwing rental to their collection.

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

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Company causes issues in city project

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | @calfee_kc

After a contracting company stopped progress on a lengthy sewer project, and the city began receiving unpaid material invoices from suppliers claiming nonpayment, Maryville’s City Council terminated its existing contract with the company March 31.

The City Council met at noon Wednesday for a special meeting to end a contract with Blue Nile Contractors, Inc., the company that had been completing the East Side Sanitary Sewer Re-

placement Project. In early February, the city noticed construction activities stopped on the site. Construction equipment was also removed. Only 65% of the project was completed by Blue Nile Contractors, and city staff later discovered the company did not submit a valid payment bond.

The city’s attorney is working to determine legal options for the unpaid invoices. After the attorney said the City Council could legally terminate the city’s contract with the company, a special meeting was called to do so.

Public Works Director C.E.

Goodall attended the meeting March 31 to clarify why the project was important and present the latest updates to the City Council.

The East Side Sanitary Sewer Replacement Project replaces an existing 21-inch undersized sanitary sewer main on the south side of U.S. Highway 136 stretching from Nucor LMP to the Maryville Wastewater Treatment Plant. The city said the existing line is in poor condition and leaves the system vulnerable to an influx of storm water.

After the project is complete, a new 36-inch sanitary sewer main

will be functional to provide larger capacity for the system.

“The other thing it’s kind of accomplishing for is getting (the sewer main) out of the middle of the field down there for the farmer,” Goodall said. “The other manholes were buried, so we didn’t have access to them, so we kind of worked it out to be able to have access to these.”

After Councilman Tye Parsons said he had concerns with city liability and implications of terminating the contract, City Manager Greg McDanel said Blue Nile already received a standard notice

given the contract terms.

The City Council voted unanimously to end its contract with Blue Nile Contractors and then voted unanimously to enter a new contract with Pyramid Excavation & Construction.

Maryville’s contract for the entire project with Blue Nile cost \$597,264.12. The contract with Pyramid Excavation & Construction, to complete the final 35%, cost \$254,288.

Councilman Jason McDowell was not in attendance, and Councilwoman Rachael Martin attended via Zoom.

Professor authors book exploring rodeo as identity, refuge

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | @calfee_kc

Most history buffs say the rodeo was born in 1869, when two groups of cowboys met in Deer Trail, Colorado, to settle an argument about who was the better cowboy. But that was 152 years ago, before it became a sport, before the scope of time-honored traditions settled in — before anyone could believe minorities would find refuge there.

Elyssa Ford, an associate professor of history, wrote a book detailing how diverse communities are impacted by rodeo. Her book titled “Rodeo as Refuge, Rodeo as Rebellion” goes beyond the cowboy clichés to provide a complete view of the American West.

Inspiration for her book came during an internship her senior year of college at the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Texas. Ford, who grew up in Eastville, Texas, has been around rodeo a lot of her life, but it wasn’t something she was involved in or interested in until the internship.

Ford noticed the museum, at

the time, focused mostly on white women; there were only two non-white women in the Hall of Fame. Ford said she knew there had to be more minorities involved in rodeo. She knew there were several different types of nonwhite rodeos that existed and that the historic population of Texas allowed for diverse representation in the arenas.

After pondering the issue for a while, Ford thought the concept would be perfect for her master’s thesis and Ph.D. dissertation in graduate school. Investigating these roots of rodeo became her mission.

“These are not the dominant rodeos. People are not as familiar with them, and most people haven’t cared about them,” Ford said. “So no one was collecting their stories, or archives haven’t been collecting their ... meetings or materials.”

“For most history projects you get to go to an archive and study the materials and then say, ‘I’m going to determine what the story is based on that,’” Ford said. “So what do you do when there’s no archives?”



Northwest associate professor Elyssa Ford holds up her book “Rodeo as Refuge, Rodeo as Rebellion.” The topic came about during an internship at the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame.

Research was difficult, and the process took years to go through, but Ford had a story to tell. It wasn’t her story, but she felt responsible, and she knew how to reach the voices who could tell it best.

Ford researched extensively online, listened to oral histories, conducted interviews, traveled to watch and engage with rodeo participants, and looked at many news-

papers from across the nation. She got to see old photographs that don’t exist in textbooks and didn’t make the newspapers.

Remembering back to a summer she spent working on the book, Ford said she spent 10 to 12 hours a day reading online archives, taking notes, “clicking and dragging.” She spent that summer at home, sitting at an old desk that used to be her grandmother’s before she died.

Sitting at a historic desk, a historian gathered the stories that needed to be told — stories she found entertaining, but stories she also knew people could learn from. The countless hours her mouse moved back and forth across the desk wore down the varnish, which her mother wasn’t too happy about.

Ford made a point for her book to expand beyond women in rodeo, to include Black rodeo, gay rodeo, Native American rodeo, Hawaiian rodeo and the Charreada, a Mexican rodeo. Forms of these rodeos go on to be “living history,” an

artform that continues to incorporate historical tools and methods in today’s shows. The overarching theme Ford discusses throughout the book is looking at each form of rodeo comparatively, distinguishing each for their unique qualities.

“When you look at participation in all of those rodeos, then you see why there are still these separate rodeos when segregation is no longer a thing,” Ford said.

The challenging part of this, though, was because Ford researched five different types of rodeo; it was essentially writing five different books and squeezing them into one.

Initially, Ford wanted to focus on nonwhite women in the 1910s and 1920s, specifically, which was the height of women in rodeo. But the trail for this research turned up cold, and Ford had to broaden her focus. Even so, this situation turned out for the better, she said.

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Bridges, roads may receive help soon



President Joe Biden’s administration is looking to spend money to improve infrastructure, and America needs the money as fast as it can get it. American infrastructure is failing. No matter where you live, how you get around your city, how you get electricity or water — it is crumbling. But it takes more than the federal government to pass one bill to fix the problem.

The American Society of Civil Engineers compiles a report every four years to determine the quality of infrastructure. This report covers everything from roads to electric grids and bridges, even hazardous waste disposal. The overall grade for the U.S. is a C-minus.

This grade comes from an average from every state and Puerto Rico. No single national infrastructure category gets a grade higher than a B. The ASCE reported U.S. water lines are so degraded that there is a water main break every two minutes, wasting 6 billion gallons of water every day. That is enough clean, treated water to fill 9,000 swimming pools.

The 2018 report gave Missouri an average grade of C-minus, and it only gets worse from there. Not a single category of infrastructure gets above a C, and Missouri has consistently worse infrastructure than other states. For example, 12.5% of Missouri’s bridges are structurally deficient. Compare that to the national average of 7.5%. Missouri’s roads grade even worse.

The state’s roads get a D-plus grade. ASCE reports that 25% of Missouri’s roads are in poor condition, and the lack of adequate roads prove to do harm to the population’s wallet. The ASCE estimates that residents spend \$604 annually in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs because of poor road conditions.

Solving these issues is an expensive task. The Missouri Department of Transportation oversees state roads and bridges. The largest source of revenue for MoDOT is the statewide gas tax of 17 cents per gallon. This tax was last increased in 1996. As a result, MoDOT has seen its purchasing power decrease over that time to 6 cents due to inflation. MoDOT reports that it loses \$50 billion-\$60 billion in purchasing power every year.

The amount of money needed to fix these issues leads to the state, local and federal governments playing whack-a-mole with infrastructure. By the time one spot is fixed, another road, bridge or water line needs repaired. Maryville is no different than the rest of Missouri.

All levels of government need to step in to prevent any further degradation. Missouri needs to increase MoDOT’s funding. The federal government needs to pass sweeping legislation to improve any infrastructure inside of its jurisdiction, like interstates, and then provide grants to cities so they can invest in water lines and roads.

Improved infrastructure is something we all need, and it’s one of the few things everyone should get behind.



CHRIS YOUNG | NW MISSOURIAN

OUR VIEW:

Structure of Student Senate elections needs to change

Northwest Student Senate elections are this week. Once again, many positions, including the entire executive board, are unopposed, and high voter turnout is not expected. The second most powerful governing body — behind the Northwest Board of Regents — and self-proclaimed “voice of the students” will have its election pass with little surprise or fanfare. It’s not entirely on Student Senate that participation in student government is low, but there are a few things they could change to make it better.

Elections are conducted online through email links and open from Monday to Friday. This year’s ballot can barely even be considered a ballot by most standards. Sure, there is the option to vote in favor of a candidate or abstain or oppose a candidate, but it doesn’t feel like it will matter. Some of the screens on the ballot instruct you to select up to four candidates out of a four-candidate pool for the position.

Less than 6% of students cast a ballot in last year’s election. While COVID-19 definitely in some ways attributed to low turnout, 2020 elections were by no means an outlier. The year prior, 9.23% of students voted in the election.

Last year’s “Elevate” ticket and this year’s “Innovate” ticket both entered elections unopposed. It’s not necessarily the fault of the candidates on each ticket that

they have or had no competition. It is, however, indicative of a larger problem.

For starters, it feels like the executive board assumes their mantles each year rather than runs for them. Underclassmen are, in essence, groomed to fill a position. It’s not a bad thing that those running for executive positions have experience, but it is bad that there’s never challengers. When the most important and recognizable posts are uncontested, there’s no reason to vote.

The filing deadline and election date are also entirely too close together. Filing started March 22, and if candidate’s filed early they could have that whole week to campaign. However, the filing deadline was Sunday and the start of the election was Monday, making it impossible for those who filed a little later to campaign before ballots were sent out.

Under the current system, Student Senate campaigns amount to one or two social media posts per candidate that are only viewed by people who are already associated with them. It defeats the entire purpose of the process if candidates only campaign to people they already know.

There should be at least a week or two-week gap between the filing deadline and the election, where candidates can campaign and students can attempt to familiarize themselves with those running.

That brings up another question: Why is there no candidate forum?

It was likely cut out due to time or maybe safety precautions, but not having an open forum for candidates is a big whiff. We aren’t saying everyone needs to be gathered together in Bearcat Stadium. It would be nice, though, if students had the opportunity to hear from those that will be governing them.

The age group that college students fall into is routinely the least civically engaged. We are less likely to vote in elections all the way down from the national to city levels. The student body at large allowed it to happen. We have turned student government into a niche activity.

It’s a vicious cycle that permeates society as a whole but is ripe in college. The things Student Senate does and has the power to do affect almost every student almost every day. At the very least, we all pay money to support them.

They can allocate funding, and they represent students in front of Northwest Administration and the Board of Regents. So, why does it feel like their elections feel more like one of the dozens of surveys sent to our student emails every semester?

Students need to start caring about Student Senate, and for that to happen, Student Senate needs to make it easier to care.

YOUR VIEW:

Did you (or will you) vote in the Student Senate elections? Why or why not?

CRAIG RICHARD
Senior
Broadcast Production



“Yeah, I’ll hopefully be voting in the election. It’s important for the future of Northwest, but I’m not even sure I’ll be able to vote because I’m a senior.”

DEANNA MATHEWS
Freshman
Criminology



“I have voted. I had someone come up and personally ask me to vote for them. I didn’t know who any of the other people were because it would be good to see the people get their positions and see what they can do as representatives of their class.”

MELODIE BEASLEY
Sophomore
Interpersonal/Organizational Communication



“To be honest, I probably won’t just for the simple fact that I don’t know who’s running and that they don’t do enough campaigning. I don’t know enough about who’s running and what they’re about. Why would I vote for someone I don’t know anything about?”

THE STROLLER:

Your Bearcat wants you to walk correctly

I’ve noticed people on campus not following one particular safety guideline. No, I’m not talking about the athletes that can run for days at practice but can’t be bothered to pull their masks over their noses. I’m also not talking about that one guy that ignores his assigned seat in class and sits right next to you; he just wants to make sure you can hear his breath. I’m talking about those of you that ignore the arrows.

As if you couldn’t tell by the blatant racism, high price for col-

lege education and poor health care, we are in the U.S. That means when we drive, we drive on the right side of the road — you know, the one named after being correct.

This idea of traveling on the opposite of the left side extends to walking as well. In a hallway, you are supposed to walk on the right side. I say the previous sentence because some of you still don’t understand it. Maybe go back and read it again.

Since the beginning of the vi-

rus that former President Donald Trump believes is cured by injecting bleach, every place from Walmart to B.D. Owens Library have put helpful arrows on the floor for the uber-intelligent individuals to understand which side to walk on. Walking to one side is supposed to help reduce person-to-person contact and is also just common sense.

This isn’t a skill you need for just the pandemic; it’s one that will help you in life. If you are able to walk on the right side,

it will show everyone from future employers to strangers on the street that you aren’t a complete and utter buffoon.

So, maybe get some quality practice and try following the simple instructions on the colorful arrows. Who knows, you might figure out how to wash your hands next or even finally learn how to wear a piece of face mask.

The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missourian.

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We publish letters from readers for free. All letters become the property of the Northwest Missourian, which reserves the right to edit them. Letters should include your name, address and telephone number. Letters should be between 150 and 300 words and sent to r.adamson@missourian@gmail.com.

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CRIME LOG

for the week of April 1

Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

March 11

Alexandria Hopkins, 19, was charged for possession of marijuana at Millikan Hall.

Maryville Department of Public Safety

March 12

A summons was issued to **Chloe M. Emery**, 18, **Shelby L. Emery**, 18, and **Emma P. Hart**, 18, for disorderly conduct on the 100 block of South Main Street.

March 17

There was an accident between **Sangok Yoo**, 33, and **Dwight A. Gregor**, 75, on U.S. Highway 71 and U.S. Highway 136. A citation was issued to Gregor for careless and imprudent driving.

March 18

A summons was issued to **Jose A. Mateo**, 31, for failure to appear in court on the 400 block of North Market Street.

March 19

There was an accident between **Heather J. Baker**, 37, and **Lois J. Farnan**, 87, of Ravenwood, Missouri, on the 1900 block of South Main Street.

March 22

There is an ongoing investigation for harassment on the 100 block of South Vine Street.

March 26

There was an accident between **Ellyn C. Fuller**, 61, and **Kari J. Maag**, 53, of Cosby, Missouri, on West South Avenue and South Munn Street. A citation was issued to **Fuller** for failure to yield.

JACKSON

CONTINUED FROM A1

He was the last candidate to distribute yard signs across the city — a signal that his campaign is one largely built on word-of-mouth and name recognition that has come with Jackson’s role as the owner of Title Town Bar and Grill.

Though he has been publicly weighing an entrance into local politics since the summer and officially filed to run for Council in December, Jackson has not made campaigning a priority in the week leading up to the election. He did not create a Facebook page for his City Council campaign until March 20 — less than three weeks before Election Day. He was the only person in the race who did not respond to The Maryville Forum’s candidate questionnaire.

And, when reached by phone at Title Town, Jackson, 47, hung up on The Missourian after learning the reason for the call was an interview request. Several follow-up messages went unanswered, making Jackson the only Council candidate who refused to speak with The Missourian.

In a post on his newly-formed campaign page, Jackson formally announced his widely known bid for Council in a well-lit video shot from inside his Maryville bar. The video begins with a drawn-out “Good morning, Maryville,” — a nod to the morning posts Jackson makes on his personal Facebook page promoting his grill’s daily menu specials, updates that often end with uplifting words reminding readers to smile.

“I truly believe this year is going to be the biggest vote ever,” Jackson said in his debut video posted the same day he formed his page. “I think we’re gonna see thousands of people come out and vote. I know in the past, people have won City Council with 100 votes, 200 votes. This year, I don’t think that comes close. This year, I think it’s gonna take 500, 600 votes.”

The increasing focus placed on Maryville’s City Council since the pandemic first upended daily life last March, coupled with recent election

history, suggests Jackson’s forecast of the upcoming municipal election will be accurate. Less than 250 voters cast ballots for Council members Rachael Martin and Ben Lipiec last June, in a pandemic-postponed municipal election that saw the two incumbents run unopposed for two open seats on the Council. But that low voter turnout rate is an outlier.

Consistently over the last five years, winning Council candidates have often received between 450 and 700 votes. In 2017, Martin and Lipiec each won more than 600 votes in a crowded field of four candidates vying for two open seats.

Martin received an election-best 638 votes in that cycle, though Jackson was not one of them. According to voting records provided to The Missourian by Nodaway County Clerk Melinda Patton, Jackson has voted in two of the last five municipal elections. Last June, when Martin and Lipiec were re-elected less than two months before they would go on to initially support Maryville’s mask ordinance, Jackson did not cast a ballot.

Jackson’s inconsistent local voting streak does not make him an outlier in this cycle’s crowded field. Fellow candidates John McBride and Dannen Merrill have each voted in two of the last five municipal elections, according to records. Ashlee Hendrix, the fourth candidate, has voted in three.

In his debut campaign video, Jackson, a Grant City, Missouri, native who has lived in several cities scattered across the region, outlined a four-pronged platform he’s running on — made up of issues that have largely been addressed or resolved entirely by the current City Council. And though he has been pegged on social media as a conservative hero, much of his platform is built on a prerequisite of increased government spending.

“I really want to work on the water — the infrastructure — getting us high quality water, folks,” said Jackson, who has voiced frustrations about Maryville’s water quality at City Council meetings over the last six months. “Maryville’s a beautiful town, but then you come here, and

six, eight months out of the year, the water isn’t great, so that’s something I really want to work on.”

In a February meeting that Jackson did not attend, at least in person, Maryville’s City Council approved a joint funding project for granular activated carbon absorbers, providing a four- to seven-year solution while the city works on long term fixes for taste and odor issues in Maryville’s water. And before the up-to-\$1.4 million project was passed in February, Marvville had spent \$860,000 trying to address the water’s taste and odor ailments since 2017.

The water issue was the first of Jackson’s four keynote issues noted in a post accompanying the video on his campaign page, where he said he plans to repeal Maryville’s face-covering ordinance, to provide more resources to city employees for road repairs and “give small business owners the right to vote,” advocating on behalf of business owners who live outside Maryville’s city limits, avoiding city-specific taxes making them ineligible vote in city elections.

Two days after Jackson made the initial post to his campaign page, Maryville’s City Council voted 4-1 to lift the mask mandate, which was set to expire at the end of April, with several Council members citing the weight the city’s divisive measure placed on its governing body. The Council’s choice to terminate the ordinance may have been a moot point. All four candidates for the Council’s two open seats have said they would not support a face-covering ordinance going forward, as vaccination rates rise and COVID-19 cases lull.

It’s unclear whether Jackson hopes to raise the city’s budget to increase investment into public works or if he’s aiming to simply reallocate funding within Maryville’s budget to help with road improvement. Jackson did not respond to a last-ditch email seeking clarification on both his voting-rights grievance and his budget plans.

While Jackson’s notoriety in Maryville has grown over the eight months largely due to his outspoken opposition to the mask mandate, that

rise has coincided with increased involvement in the community.

When the Maryville Host Lions Club announced last May it would not host its popular farmers market in 2020 due to COVID-19, Jackson stepped in, offering Title Town’s parking lot as a host site, saving the annual market after his own business had been resigned to carryout for 45 days during the early stages of the pandemic.

And Jackson, a member of Ten Squared Men — a loose organization of local men who each donate \$100 per quarter to a selected area charity — presented a \$14,000 check to Santa Cops on behalf of the group in November. Jackson was the Ten Squared Men Member who nominated Santa Cops in the last quarter of 2020.

Still, as his visibility in Maryville has increased over the last eight months — and particularly since making known his plans to run for City Council — Jackson has made himself unavailable to media outlets and the voting public at large.

In addition to declining to participate in The Forum’s candidate questionnaire and avoiding interview and comments requests for this story, Jackson too declined an interview with KXCV-KRNW. In an email to The Missourian, Lilly White, the executive director of the Greater Maryville Chamber of Commerce, said she did not expect to see Jackson at the Chamber’s local candidate forum March 31. The forum did not take place in time for publication.

And though he has amassed more than 470 followers in less than two weeks, Jackson has not posted on his campaign’s Facebook since the day he formed the page. In all, Jackson has posted twice on the page, with a short thank-you message following his initial post, which at the time of publication had amassed 112 likes, 57 shares and 18 comments — some of which came in the form of questions.

“How exactly would you fix the water situation?” asked Facebook user Lori Blake. “Do you have a plan?”

Jackson did not respond.

SOUTH

CONTINUED FROM A1

The federal BUILD grant awarded to the city in 2018 came out to \$10.5 million, or 60% of the total project cost after receiving the bids in March.

McDaniel said a lot is in motion now, but he and other officials are working on a plan of action to provide to the city council. Exact details aren’t settled yet for public display. “We do not anticipate construction prices going down any time soon,” McDaniel said. “Hopefully federal agencies will understand that. Hopefully if there’s any funding or other sources — COVID relief — anything else that would be associated and applicable, that we would be highly considered since our project is ready.”

Since many funding requests come to agencies for projects that haven’t been designed or are concept projects, McDaniel said Maryville could have an advantage with a “ready-to-go project.”

If funding is discovered and available, the city would go ahead with the project as soon as possible, McDaniel said. Since the construction process is expected to take 15-18 months, time is a factor the city will have to consider.

The South Main Improvement Project is a massive overhaul planned for 1.5 miles of South Main Street. It will feature new access points to and from businesses, move overhead power lines underground, add new landscaping and other aesthetic features, provide pedestrian and bicycle paths, wayfinding signage, an updated sewer system, and a 5-foot sidewalk on the east side.

The project was designed to address functional and aesthetic improvements, issues brought on by the rapid development in the south corridor of Maryville.

Mayor Ben Lipiec said he has no major concerns with the \$3 million gap between bids and the original budget, and that he believes city staff can adjust to the change.

“I remember as a kid who grew up in Maryville, reading and hearing about doing this project for a long time,” Lipiec said. “I think this adds a lot of benefits to a town that continues to grow and expand.”

The project has taken city officials years to develop and finalize, working with several agencies for funding and designs. The pre-construction process has already been coordinated with state and federal agencies, McDaniel said, and various property owners on the corridor have reflected an urgency for the project to be complete.



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Northwest coach Ben McCollum points to a crowd of supporters after cutting down the net March 27 in Evansville, Indiana. McCollum led Northwest to its third National Championship in five years, culminating in an 80-54 win over West Texas A&M.

CHAMPS

CONTINUED FROM A1

“We had to find a way to stay in shape. We were outside shooting in December in Maryville,” Hawkins said. “There were days where it was cold, but we still had guys, individually, that went out shooting.”

As difficult as the entirety of the season was, every game Northwest played in Evansville, Indiana, seemed to be the complete opposite. The Bearcats outscored their opponents 255-177 during their final three games of the season, which is the largest victory margin for a team throughout the three Elite Eight games (78).

Hawkins was at the forefront of all three of the victories, averaging a double-double throughout the postseason with 25.8 points and 10.4 rebounds per contest. He tallied 31 points and 18 boards in the title game, which capped off his run of individual dominance and led to the senior being named the Elite Eight’s Most Outstanding Player.

He had 15 points and 10 rebounds at halftime, which made him the first player to have a double-double in the National Championship since 2017 — when former teammate Chris-Ebou Ndow did it in the program’s first title-game victory. It was the 30th of Hawkins’ career.

“Yeah, he’s a pretty good player,” said McCollum, who recruited Hawkins from Atlantic, Iowa. “He puts a lot of work into it. ... He got on at the right time, and that helped us quite a bit.”

Hawkins wasn’t alone, though, as sophomore forward Wes Dreamer tallied 19 points and 11 rebounds for the third double-double of his career.

Hawkins and Dreamer personified the dominance Northwest displayed for the entirety of 40 minutes. The Bearcats were 50% from the field, including 46.7% from beyond the arc. It was collective success, though, as Northwest still won the most important game of the season with Diego Bernard being scoreless and NABC Division II Player of the Year Trevor Hudgins dropping 15.

“Really, it was just playing with the flow of the offense,” Hawkins said. “We were taking what the defense was giving us.”

“Trevor and Diego didn’t really have to do a lot, because we just kind of passed it inside the whole game,” McCollum said. “That just shows what winners do. They just don’t care.”

Northwest used its length to hold West Texas A&M to 31.3% from the field, including 5-of-24 from deep (20.8%). The Bearcats planned to be dominant, mostly due to the size advantage they pos-

sessed over the Buffs.

They knew it’d be like that when the ball was tipped, despite the game being tied at 13 near the midway point of the first half.

“I felt like through the first possession we knew we would be able to control the game and take what we wanted,” Hawkins said. “Under 10 minutes left in the game, we knew they were going to try and make a little push there ... kind of thought it was over then.”

To start his postgame press conference, McCollum — who had just won his 300th game — assured everyone in attendance that the Buffs didn’t have anything to hang their head on. The 12th-year coach was near the lowest of lows before rising to where he is today.

McCollum went 22-31 in his first two seasons at Northwest, which were his first ever years as a head coach. The rest is history.

“I think, sometimes, you have to suffer a little bit to improve,” McCollum said. “Those first two seasons, I suffered quite a bit. I think in order to really reach some type of pinnacle, I think there needs to be some of that.”

“That team is not a Division II team,” West Texas A&M coach Tim Brown said after the 26-point loss. “That team, I think — this is just my observation — I think they could beat half of the teams in Division I, and I think they’re actual-

ly in the wrong tournament. I think they should be in the Division I tournament this year — they’re that good.”

McCollum doesn’t care about his own personal accolades. He isn’t too concerned that he’s won 300 games in 12 years. The 300th means as much to the coach as the first, which came Nov. 16, 2009, in a 105-55 triumph of Manhattan Christian College.

He’s more so concerned with building the program, still, even though the Bearcats are 97-3 over the last three seasons.

“I think it just goes to show the eliteness that he is as a coach,” Hawkins said while donning his newly-acquired, celebratory National Championship hat and shirt.

This season wasn’t an outlier, either. The Bearcats’ dominance isn’t something they’re unfamiliar with. In the last five seasons, Northwest has captured five MIAA regular season titles, four MIAA Tournament titles, three national championships and a record of 159-8. The Bearcats’ latest run is one that’ll go down as one of the best in Division II history — at least McCollum thinks so.

“I don’t think there’s been any better, if there is any better,” McCollum said about the Bearcats’ sustained success. “It’s pretty unbelievable — unprecedented, really.”



Maryville High School sophomore Cooper Loe prepares to swing his bat in the Spoofhounds 20-3 win over the South Bulldogs March 30. Loe hit a grand slam over the left field fence, giving Maryville a 13-2 lead with one out.

HOUNDS
CONTINUED FROM A10

A passed ball allowed Drake to score, and a Wilmes’ single drove in Farnan. Loe followed Wilmes’ up with a single of his own, and South Harrison sophomore Jad Cornett committed a throwing error on a ground ball off the bat of Weiss, scoring both Wilmes and Loe to give the Spoofhounds an 8-2 lead heading into the bottom of the second inning.

The Spoofhounds recorded three stolen bases in the second inning, something Houchin said was a goal of theirs coming into the game.

“We could jump on it pretty quick,” Houchin said. “We know what they’re doing, and we know what they’re trying to do, so getting some steals was good.”

After giving up a two-run home run in the first inning, sophomore Adam Patton settled in for the Spoofhounds, striking out two batters and forcing a weak ground ball to get through the second inning unscathed.

Maryville blew the game open

in the third inning. Houchin walked to start the inning, and after a Drake pop out and a Farnan walk, Kreizinger drove Houchin in on a single to shallow center field. Kreizinger stole second and Wilmes singled, bringing up Loe with the bases loaded. Loe unloaded the bases with a grand slam over the left field fence, giving Maryville a 13-2 lead with one out.

White struck out for the second out of the inning, and Maryville erupted for a seven-run, two-out rally. The Spoofhounds collected seven runs on five hits and five South Harrison errors, including two, two-run doubles by senior Ben Walker and sophomore Blake Katen to stretch the Spoofhounds’ lead to 20-2.

After recording a hit and sitting in the dugout for nearly half an hour, Patton came back out to the mound to try and secure the three-inning win for the Spoofhounds.

Patton allowed one more run in the bottom of the third inning, as Sunderman hit his second home run of the afternoon, a solo shot that cut the lead to 20-3. The Bulldogs were not able to add any more runs, and

Patton closed the game out a few batters later.

Patton struck out six in his three innings of work, giving up three runs on two hits.

“I’m really proud,” Maryville coach Hans Plackemeier said about Patton. “He did great; he did everything we wanted him to do.”

In the first year under Plackemeier, the Spoofhounds are now 2-0 and have a focus on offensive production, scoring nine in their first game and 20 in their second, which is only going to improve as the season goes on, Wilmes said.

“We’ll just keep on improving,” Wilmes said. “Throughout, like, live pitching and batting, I feel like this team is just going to excel on offense.”

The Spoofhounds hope to play a more consistent schedule after being rained out for the first week of the season as they return to MEC play against St. Joseph Lafayette April 1.

“It’s just getting out here,” Plackemeier said. “That first week we were rained out every game; we’re looking forward to getting out there and playing against Lafayette — they’re a great team.”

RIVALRY
CONTINUED FROM A10

The gauntlet of the regular season continues with rival Missouri Western April 3 in St. Joseph. The Griffons have quality outside and middle hitters, including senior Ali Tauchen.

Tauchen has made an impact on the court since stepping on campus in St. Joseph her freshman year. In 2017, she was named MIAA Freshman of the Year and second-team all-MIAA.

Since 2019, Tauchen has been named first-team all-MIAA and recorded season-highs in kills and points for the Griffons with 23 kills and 26.5 points.

The Bearcats can strategize and watch hours of film, but Western will want to keep the rivalry alive, looking to avenge a loss from March 17 and avoid a seven-game losing skid to the ‘Cats.

“More than anything, it’s a rival. It doesn’t matter what happens. We beat them on our home court, so they’re going to want to beat us on their home court,” Woerth said. “We’re just excited to get there and play on someone else’s court and end up doing our game plan to our

highest ability we can.”

The series between the Bearcats and Griffons is tied 9-9 since 2012, stressing that skill set is thrown out when playing in a rivalry.

There can be a lot of excitement and hype surrounding a team before taking the court against a rival, but for Lewis, it’s just another game on the schedule.

“The main thing we do to prepare for any team is to make sure our systems are efficient and consistent,” Lewis said. “When facing a rival, we focus on how we can control our side of the court, no matter what the other team is doing. We try not to make it too emotional or big in our heads — they are just another team.”

Northwest is one game behind Washburn in the MIAA North Division. With two games remaining after Western, every game matters to secure the No. 2 seed in the division.

“I don’t think we feel more pressure; we just take each game as it comes our way. Washburn is a good team, but we know they are beatable. We just have to take it one step at a time,” Lewis said. “We don’t dwell too much on the past or future. We’d rather focus on the present game and go from there.”

LAMKIN
CONTINUED FROM A10

The renovation is also to provide up-to-date accommodations for the football players, considering there haven’t been any modifications made to the locker room since Peterson attended Northwest as a men’s basketball player from 2003-08.

“We took away 11 of their lockers for the laundry room expansion, so they have — on a roster of 148 guys — 40-plus that are sharing lockers,” Peterson said. “It’s not that big of a deal, but it is when you’re trying to keep mold from being an issue on pads and in lockers with the lack of ventilation.”

“When you think about how technology has changed, we’re the electronic campus, but nobody can plug in their phone. There are very limited ports down there,” said Wright, who has been in that same locker room since coming to Northwest as a graduate assistant in 1995. “There’s no direct ventilation; it smells awful down there because

you have humidity issues.”

The locker room isn’t just a space to change before and after competition. Roughly 95% of football players at Northwest live off campus, Wright said. That means the locker room is a space Wright hopes serves as a home away from home.

“The locker room kind of becomes their home during the day,” Wright said. “They get to spend time and bond together; in any team sport, that’s important. ... To be able to provide those guys with a place to interact becomes paramount.”

Northwest football has a joint-practice with Sioux Falls April 16 in Maryville, but Wright said the last day in his space will be April 8.

While it’s only directly benefiting the football team right now, the next phase in the Lamkin project is to address the training facilities and weight room, which are used by every student-athlete.

“It’s just, we’ve gotta start somewhere,” Peterson said. “This was the first bite out of the elephant for us to take.”

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Men, women eye wins during road trip to Oklahoma

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter | @CalvinSilvers

No. 23-ranked Northwest men's tennis is looking to keep its MIAA record unblemished against Southeastern Oklahoma State April 1 in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.



The Savage Storm has the upper hand on the Bearcats, winning the past two matchups, most recently winning 4-0 March 12, 2020.

Northwest coach Mark Rosewell is hoping some unsung players can make a name for themselves in the contest, which could help the 'Cats get back on track against the Savage Storm.

"Well, we're hoping our depth is better than it's been the last couple of years," Rosewell said. "We lost a close match two years ago, and we lost 4-0 last year, so you know, they've had pretty good teams. I guess we'll find out Thursday."

For Southeastern, senior Juan Scoppetta has dominated the court in singles matchups. Ranked No. 34 nationally, Scoppetta brings momentum in singles play, picking up a 6-2, 6-5 victory in his last match against Oklahoma Baptist March 26.

Being the workhorse for the Savage Storm, Scoppetta is helping his teammate, senior Manuel Pilotto, in doubles play. The pair is ranked No. 25 and is carrying a win onto the court against the Bearcats.

In 2019, Pilotto became the first Savage Storm tennis player to win the ITA Central Region Individual Championship. Rosewell knows having to face top-tier individuals will bring forth the best effort from his team.

"Well, they have a great team. We know their matchups, as they have ITA champions, and we do too," Rosewell said. "I think it's going to be a 4-3 match either way; it's going to be close."

UP NEXT

NW @ Northeastern State
3 p.m. April 2
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

With a perfect 5-0 MIAA record in the North Division, the Bearcats are sitting in the driver's seat, but Washburn is closing in as the Ichabods sit two games behind the 'Cats with a 3-0 conference record. With three conference games remaining, every matchup matters.

"(The games) are very important because it's not only a conference match, but it's a regional match," Rosewell said. "If we're trying to win the conference tournament and trying to get into the NCAA post-tournament, these are teams we have to beat, very important."

Northwest had a Division I matchup scheduled April 4 against Nebraska-Omaha, but the game had to be postponed due to Easter. The Bearcats will try to reschedule the contest, but no date has been set.

Northwest women's tennis is ranked No. 9 in the region and is growing more experienced with each matchup. Eight seniors highlight the nine-person roster, and they get a chance to break some losing skids April 1-3.

"I think they're very, very excited. Very young team... but they're talented and we're getting better each match, we just need more experience," Rosewell said about the women's team.

Playing three different teams on three different days while being on the road will allow for the experience to grow, and it starts with Southeastern Oklahoma State April 1.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Junior midfielder Marissa Schmitt evades Missouri Western defender Kelsey Berkey in Northwest soccer's 0-0 draw with the Griffons in two overtimes March 12 at Spratt Memorial Stadium in St. Joseph.

Northwest soccer readies for return, rematch with UCM after long break

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter | @curly_corbs

For the last three weeks, Northwest soccer has lined up against itself in hopes of recreating the atmosphere of a regular-season matchup. Now, exiting their hiatus from outside competition, the Bearcats excitedly await the commencement of the second half of their season.



The Bearcats (1-0-1) will begin their final stretch of the season with a rematch against Central Missouri (3-3) April 2 at Bearcat Pitch, and then take the road to face Emporia State (3-0) April 4. Coach Marc Gordon is prepared to end the break and get back to competing.

"It's been a long wait, but any time there's an opportunity for players to play outside of the team, we're excited," Gordon said. "Hopefully, the team has taken information and can apply it and grow."

To fill the void of competition, Gordon had his team play weekly scrimmages against itself to try and keep that game-like structure. Senior Alex Mausbach said not having games put the 'Cats at a disadvantage because other MIAA opponents have been playing regular games. This motivated them to continue working hard in practice to counteract the deficit this break put them in.

Mausbach made it a point to

get the most out of what her team was given and not count the empty schedule as a setback.

"I think scrimmaging is better than just straight up practicing all the time," Mausbach said. "You can't really simulate an actual game, just because you're not going to have the same adrenaline rush and intensity. It's still as high as we can make it, though."

Heading into their match against the Jennies, Gordon wants the Bearcats to use the training they've gotten to push them past this game. He emphasized that the rematch is only a single game, a nonconference game at that. There's no championship implication, only a chance to grow and play a game that could easily be taken considering the current pandemic situation.

"It's much bigger than this one game," Gordon said. "The information we're trying to give is hopefully going to be instilled as a program regardless of who the opponent is. This season is that for us. Yes, of course we look at the next game on the schedule, and that's UCM."

One thing Gordon and Mausbach look to alter in this upcoming rematch would be the defense. In its first matchup, Northwest soccer gave up four consecutive goals to Central and had to fight back from a 2-point deficit. Mausbach believes that getting back on defense after a change in possession could solve

UP NEXT

NW vs. Central Missouri
3 p.m. April 2
Bearcat Pitch

some defensive issues for the 'Cats.

"I think we need to do better at moving as a unit," Mausbach said. "We need to flip the switch right away and get our butts back on defense. We just need to move collectively as a whole instead of getting caught off guard by the counterattack."

Gordon said the first game must've been fun to watch given there were more goals than a regular game. However, from a coach's standpoint, it was not a comforting game to command.

Depending on the results of the game, Gordon hopes to learn which direction the team is heading. The game preceding Northwest's first official conference game against Emporia State will let Gordon know whether his scrimmages paid off or not, as well as giving him an idea on what to fix before heading to face the undefeated Hornets.

"Hopefully our team defense has improved," Gordon said. "Central is an offensive-minded team that can produce a lot of goals. If we can improve on how many goals we conceded last time, it'll be a step in the right direction for our team."

"It's important that we don't underestimate UCM," Mausbach said. "We've stayed focused in our training the last couple of weeks; we just need to make it a point this week to stay on top of that."

Mausbach said the team energy is an important part in how well the Bearcats perform in both of their weekend matches. For her, the intensity started in the last few before the sun crossed the horizon in the weightroom.

Every Friday morning included a fast-paced, high-intensity workout to try and get the team that same adrenaline rush that comes in game-time situations. The prowler sleds and heavy weights challenged the 'Cats to wake up and work hard. The high-intensity workouts force the players to come together and pull each other along to finish training giving them a boost in team morale.

"I think our weight's energy translates to how our bench acts during a game," Mausbach said. "Lately, it's been super positive. We've been super energetic and encouraging for the girls on the field, and it kind of gives us that extra oomph when we're dying."

Bench involvement and defensive improvements will be key for Northwest to pull out wins against two of the MIAA's top programs. Coupled with everything going exactly as the training has prepared them for, both Mausbach and Gordon think that Northwest has a good chance.

"I'm very confident that if we play to the very best of our abilities, we'll come out with a couple of wins this weekend," Mausbach said.

"Every game provides an opportunity to win," Gordon said. "You go out with the mindset to do the job at hand. If we're successful in applying the things that we've been training, we'll have an opportunity to compete well with them. We'll take it from there."

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Bearcats take two against Newman

THOMAS TURNER
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

Northwest baseball ended its four-game losing streak last week-end by winning two of the three games against the Newman Jets. The Bearcats’ starting pitchers and hitters were the difference makers in both wins.

In the first game, the Bearcats dominated to beat the Jets 12-2. Junior pitcher Max Spitzmiller and junior outfielder Donovan Warren led the way for the team.



Northwest baseball junior Jacob Pinkerton hits the ball during the Bearcats’ March 21 game against Pittsburg State. During their three-game series against Newman March 26-27 in Wichita, Kansas, the Bearcats won two of their three games, improving their overall record to 8-11.

continue to get better.”

Spitzmiller went the distance on the mound, giving up three hits and two runs while striking out 11 Jets’ batters.

He now leads the team in strikeouts with 45 and captured his seventh career victory.

the pitcher ended up losing some control toward the end.

“Spencer tweaked his back in the fifth and lost some of his control after that,” Loe said. “He wasn’t as sharp after that. Hopefully, it’s not a big deal and he will be ready to go next week.”

Freshman starting pitcher Zach Wiese went 6 2/3 innings, giving up four hits and two runs while striking out six.

In the seventh inning, the Northwest bullpen gave up three runs and the Jets captured a 5-2 lead.

The Bearcats got one back in the

“We trust each other, and we are finally getting hitting and pitching to do well together.”

-BRETT HOLDEN

“Having the offense score early is great,” Spitzmiller said. “It’s always fun to pitch with a lead. I am a fastball, slider and change-up guy, and that game I was just trying to throw strikes and it worked for me.”

The next day, the Bearcats fell in the first game of the doubleheader by a score of 5-4. Junior pitcher Spencer Hanson gave up five runs and five hits through 4 2/3.

Loe was proud of what he saw from Hanson early in the game, but

Junior shortstop Jacob Pinkerton helped out on the offensive end with two hits, two RBIs and a walk.

“I am just trying to stay loose and stay on time,” Pinkerton said. “I just keep looking for that low pitch, which I got a couple of times. Having short-term memory is important. Trying to stay focused on a pitch and if I miss it, I mentally have to move on.”

In the final game of the series, Northwest was able to rally six runs across the plate in the ninth inning to secure a 9-5 win.

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ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
Freshman Kristen Ford bumps the ball during the Northwest 3-0 sweep of Park University on Senior Night at Bearcat Arena. Out of the nine service aces from Northwest, Ford registered a match-high four services.

Bearcats ready for Griffis after key wins

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter | @CalvinSilvers

No. 18 Northwest volleyball traveled to Topeka, Kansas, March 27 to compete in the Washburn Crossover. The event allowed MIAA teams in the North Division to compete against teams from the South Division, which was implemented this year.

Standing in the Bearcats' way was No. 24 Central Missouri (8-3), who sits atop the MIAA South Division. The Jennies brought a four-game winning streak into the matchup, but the 'Cats had one goal on their mind: win the only matchup between the two schools this year.

After splitting the two-game, regular-season series with the Jennies in 2019, the Bearcats wanted to prove they belong among the best in the MIAA, and showcased that with a three-set sweep.

"I think it goes to show that if



we are consistent with our game plan and consistent with what we're doing, the results are going to take care of themselves," Northwest coach Amy Woerth said about beating Central. "I think it's great that they're on top in the South, but just from our standpoint, we really tend to focus on the process and what we need to do to get there."

The Bearcats took a short break from MIAA action March 30, when No. 2-ranked NAIA Park University traveled to Maryville. It was all Northwest from the beginning, and the Pirates could never find their footing, losing in three sets.

Bearcat sophomore Jaden Ferguson took charge in the first set. She tallied five kills and ended the set with a hard-hitting kill to give Northwest the set.

"Offense was definitely on fire tonight, and I felt like our defense was getting a lot of touches," Senior middle blocker Morgan Lewis said. "We

UP NEXT

NW @ Missouri Western
2 p.m. April 3
St. Joseph, Missouri

were just working really well together, and it all just worked out in the end."

The second set saw the wind taken out of the sails for the Pirates, as they hit minus .029 with six kills and seven errors. On the other side, Northwest tallied 11 kills, and Ferguson added three more kills in the second.

On Senior Night, the Bearcats left it all on the court, and for Lewis, she wouldn't have wanted it any other way.

"It's bittersweet, to say the least," Lewis said. "This has been my home for four years, so leaving it is kind of hard, but it's definitely been a great journey. I wouldn't imagine it with anyone else."

SEE RIVALRY | A7

'Hounds find hot start with big bats, win over Bethany

KESTON OLTMAN
Sports Reporter | @KO_12_14

BETHANY, Mo. — Maryville baseball improved its record to 2-0 with a dominant, three-inning 20-3 win over the South Harrison Bulldogs March 30.

Maryville started the first inning well, as senior Caleb Kreizinger walked and senior Kade Wilmes drove him across the plate with a double into the left field gap.

Sophomore Cooper Loe struck out to bring up senior Dylan White, who hit a two-run home run over the left field fence to give the Spoofhounds a 3-0 lead.

South Harrison came out hot on offense as well, as freshman Cayden Eckerson walked and sophomore Hunter Ackley lined out on a shot to center field, bringing up senior Braydon Sunderman, who smacked a two-run home run over



UP NEXT

MHS @ Lafayette
6:30 p.m. April 1
St. Joseph, Missouri

the center field fence to cut the Spoofhounds' lead to 3-2.

After getting out the first inning with a slim lead, the Spoofhounds' success at the plate continued in the top of the second inning.

Senior Trey Houchin walked to start the top of the second inning for Maryville and junior Connor Drake reached second to put runners on second and third with no outs. Senior Brady Farnan recorded an infield single on a weak ground ball down the third base line that drove in Houchin to give the Spoofhounds a 4-2 lead.

SEE HOUNDS | A7



KESTON OLTMAN | NW MISSOURIAN
Maryville High School sophomore Adam Patton pitches the ball during the first inning of their three-inning 20-3 win over South Harrison High School March 30. Patton struck out two batters and forced a weak ground ball to get their team through the second inning.

Lamkin to receive makeover funded by donations

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

There's a room that sits on the bottom floor of the Lamkin Activity Center, a room that's home to nearly every piece of equipment used by Northwest Athletics, including all of the teams' uniforms and the washers and dryers used to clean them.

In the fall of 2016, amid drying a load of laundry, a small fire started. While no major damage was done, it opened the eyes of the administrators to some issues not only in that room, but Lamkin as a whole.

"We realized, quickly, that we were not to code. There are some significant issues with that," Northwest Director of Athletics Andy Peterson said. "So, to do that, we had to expand into the football locker room about 3 feet."

It was more than four years ago, but perhaps that one fire is leading to a renovation of the bottom floor in Lamkin, which totals nearly \$1.5 million. Northwest's Board of Regents approved a contract for construction on the Northwest football program's locker room March 18, including a note that the contract was not to exceed the \$1.5 million mark. The completion date for the renovations is set for July 30, so construction will start in the early weeks of April.

Northwest football coach Rich Wright has been at the forefront of the fundraising operation, which is roughly \$100,000 short of the aforementioned goal. He's not raising money for just a new facelift to football's locker room. His efforts, and everyone's alike, will go toward more than what visitors in Lamkin can see.

"The real underlying issues are some of the guts of Lamkin," Wright said. "You've got HVAC issues, plumbing issues down there. We have electrical issues. ... It became a fundraising deal, not to just — so to speak — put lipstick on the pig."

The purpose of the project is, in part, to completely renovate football's locker room, but that's mostly due to the fact that it makes the most sense to start there with the overarching plan to alter Lamkin. The plumping, Peterson said, starts with the football facility. It wouldn't make sense to fix anything else before fixing the root of the issues, he said.

Wright knows it isn't just his football players who will benefit from the money he's raised. The people who have donated know that, too, though most of them are alumni of the football program, Wright said.

Most of the donations are from former players, including some from as recent as 2017, Wright recalled. The further back the alumni were from, Wright said, the larger the donations got.

As a Division II athletic department, Athletics doesn't have the luxury of brand new facilities, which is why Peterson is starting a multiphase renovation with some of the most important parts.

"This isn't just football stuff; it's everything in the equipment room. So, all of that stuff will be better cared for and protected," Peterson said. "We don't have resources bouncing around endlessly, where we can just go and get whatever we want. When we do get stuff, we need to take care of it."

SEE LAMKIN | A7

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